

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

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SUBJECT: DAMASCUS INTERNATIONAL FAIR (CPF) JULY 25-AUG.

20, 1976

REF: (A) DAMASCUS 4962 (B) DAMASCUS 0187

1. USDOC/STATE CPF COMMITTEE ENDORSES POST RECOMMENDATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN DAMASCUS INTERNATIONAL FAIR. POLITICAL ECONOMIC BENEFITS TO BE REALIZED OUTWEIGH SOMEWHAT NEGATIVE REACTION OF CERTAIN 1975 PARTICIPANTS AS EVIDENCED IN EXHIBITION DIRECTORS FINAL REPORT.

2. CPF CRITERIA (A-9254) AND AVAILABLE USDOC STAFFING ARE BASED UPON PRIMARY RECRUITMENT RESPONSIBILITY OF POST WITH BACKUP SUPPORT BY USDOC. THEREFORE BASIC MODIFICATION PROPOSED REFTEL A PARA 2 NOT FEASIBLE. THE PAST TWO DAMASCUS FAIRS HAVE BEEN ESSENTIALLY RECRUITED THROUGH BEIRUT RTDC WHICH OBVIOUSLY CANNOT BE SOURCE OF 1976 RECRUITMENT. POST MOUNTED SOLICITATION MAIL AND CABLE CAMPAIGN DIRECT TO TOP OFFICIALS AMERICAN COMPANIES WAS MOST EFFECTIVE IN PROCURING PARTICIPATION FOR CPF GHANA.

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DAMAS-

CUS CAMPAIGN WOULD NEED TO BE INITIATED IMMEDIATELY WITH CUTOFF DATE NLT APRIL 5 FOR RECEIPT OF ALL P.A.'S AND INDUSTRY CONTRIBUTIONS. USDOC WOULD PROVIDE NECESSARY WASHINGTON FOLLOW UP WITH POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS.

3. DAMASCUS TWO-YEARS EXPERIENCE SUGGESTS EXHIBITION OF APPROXIMATELY 1000 SQUARE METERS INSIDE PLUS POSSIBLY 1000 SQUARE METERS OUTSIDE FOR TOTAL OF 25-30 AMERICAN FIRMS.

OVERALL BUDGET NTE 85,000 DOLLARS WITH USDOC SUPPORT NTE 35,000 DOLLARS AND POST-PROCURED INDUSTRY CONTRIBUTION NLT 50,000 DOLLARS FINAL FEES WOULD BE DETERMINED BY AVAILABLE SPACE, RENTAL COSTS, AND EXHIBIT PLAN DEVELOPED BY USDOC DESIGNER FOR BEST SPACE UTILIZATION. PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE BASED UPON LAST YEARS COSTS WOULD CALL FOR APPROXIMATELY 2300 DOLLARS FOR INSIDE 3X4 METER BOOTHS AND 17 DOLLARS PER SQUARE METER FOR OUTSIDE SPACE.

4. USDOC REQUESTS POST ADVISE SPACE AVAILABLE, RENTAL COSTS, AND AIRPOUCHED BUILDING FLOOR PLAN FOR FEASABILITY STUDY AND EXHIBITION PLAN DRAFTING. SOME INDICATION OF PRESENT USE OF BUILDING WILL BE HELPFUL. USDOC WOULD APPRECIATE POST COMMENT ON PARA 3 PROPOSED LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION SINCE ADDITIONAL FUNDING NOT AVAILABLE FROM WASHINGTON.

5. RATHER THAN CAIRO SHIPMENT OF TYPE A DISPLAY SYSTEM WHICH ENTAILS HIGH CRATING AND SHIPPING ROUND TRIP COSTS. DAMASCUS CONSTRUCTION COULD REASONABLY BE SIMPLEST USDOC DESIGN PANEL SYSTEM MODIFIED TO ACCEPT LOCAL MATERIALS WITH POSSIBLE DAMASCUS SOURCE BASED UPON COMPETITIVE BIDS. WE ESTIMATE COSTS FOR EXHIBIT CONSTRUCTION/ERECTION/DISMANTLING NTE 40,000 DOLLARS.

6. SHIPPING WOULD INDICATE TARTOUS MAY BE BEST PORT OF ENTRY RATHER THAN LATAKIA SINCE PORT CONGESTION THERE PRESENTLY ONLY 5 DAYS. STRAIGHT-THROUGH B/L TO DAMASCUS IS POSSIBLE. OVERLAND EUROPEAN SHIPMENTS BELIEVED DIFFICULT BUT POSSIBLE. REQUEST POST COMMENTS.

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7. IT IS FURTHER SUGGESTED THAT POST MAY BE ABLE TO PURSUE GOS INTEREST IN USA PARTICIPATION BY ENCOURAGING ITS REVIEW OF HANDLING FEES, PORTER MONOPOLY, HIDDEN CHARGES, ETC. AS INDICATED IN 1976 EXHIBITION DIRECTOR'S REPORT. CORRECTION OF SUCH ABUSES OF EXHIBITORS WILL GREATLY AID IN ENCOURAGING RETURN OF PAST EXHIBITORS. SISCO

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